



Tender Brief - External Evaluation of the *Fusion Communities* Programme (2026–2029)

1. Contract Overview

Active Fusion invites tenders from suitably experienced organisations or consultants to deliver an independent external evaluation of *Fusion Communities*, a three-year, place-based community sport and health programme funded through the National Lottery Community Fund – Reaching Communities.

The evaluation will generate robust, longitudinal, and qualitative evidence of impact, learning and preventative value to inform:

- Future commissioning and sustainability
- Local and regional decisionmakers
- Continuous improvement and learning
- Accountability to funders, partners, and communities

Contract value: Maximum £17,000 (inclusive of all fees, expenses, and VAT where applicable)

Contract duration: Three years

Anticipated start: Summer 2026

2. About the Programme

Active Fusion exists to unlock every child's potential through sport, physical activity and leadership development, with a focus on children and young people experiencing poverty, exclusion, and disadvantage.

Fusion Communities scales Active Fusion's proven place-based model by embedding locally recruited Community Sport & Health Coaches across priority Doncaster localities (DN1, DN6, DN7, DN12 and S64).

Over three years, the programme will:

- Deliver free, youth led, community based physical activity
- Prioritise engagement of the least active and most disadvantaged
- Support healthier, safer, and more connected communities
- Enable meaningful youth voice, co-design and leadership
- Support progression into volunteering, leadership, and positive destinations



Expected reach includes:

- 800 young people in Year 1
- 1,200 young people per year in Years 2 and 3
- At least 200 young people gaining leadership experience over three years

3. Purpose of the External Evaluation

The external evaluation will:

- Provide independent verification of outcomes and impact
- Demonstrate change over time for young people and communities
- Quantify health, wellbeing, social and preventative benefits
- Strengthen Active Fusion's commissioning and sustainability case
- Support learning and refinement as the programme scales

The evaluation must be proportionate, mixed methods and learning focused, complementing (not duplicating) Active Fusion's internal monitoring.

4. Evaluation Focus and Outcomes

The evaluator will assess progress against the programme's agreed outcomes:

Be Healthier

- Increased physical activity participation and frequency
- Progress towards 60 active minutes per day
- Improved self-reported physical and mental wellbeing

Help Children and Young People Thrive

- Increased confidence, safety and belonging
- Trusted relationships with peers and adults
- Sustained engagement over time

Power, Voice, and Co-Design

- Young people influencing activities and decisions
- Evidence of "you said, we did" changes



- Participation in youth planning and feedback structures

Progression and Life Chances

- Leadership skills, confidence, and qualifications
- Progression into volunteering, leadership, or other positive destinations

5. Scope of Work

5.1 Inception and Evaluation Design

The evaluator will:

- Refine evaluation questions and theory of change
- Design a longitudinal, mixed methods approach
- Agree roles, data flows, ethics, and reporting schedules
- Align tools and methods with Active Fusion's monitoring systems

5.2 Longitudinal Analysis (Core Requirement)

The evaluator must deliver a clear and credible longitudinal approach, evidencing change over time rather than point-in-time outcomes.

This will include:

- Cohort tracking using CRM data and agreed identifiers
- Analysis of baseline, follow-up, and endpoint measures
- Exploration of retention, progression, and sustained engagement
- Analysis of dose/intensity (frequency and length of participation)
- Identification of variation by locality as the model scales
- Testing and refinement of the programme's theory of change over time

The evaluator should clearly articulate how findings evidence early intervention and preventative value, particularly for commissioners.

5.3 Qualitative and Participatory Evaluation (Core Requirement)

A strong qualitative strand is required to capture lived experience and contextualise quantitative findings.

This should include:



- In-depth qualitative methods, proportionate to budget, such as:
 - Interviews with young people, coaches and partners
 - Focus groups with youth leadership or planning groups
 - Light-touch observation where appropriate
- Development of longitudinal case studies, following a small cohort of young people over time to illustrate:
 - Changes in wellbeing, confidence, belonging, and aspirations
 - Progression into leadership, volunteering, or positive destinations
 - The role of trusted adults and youth led design
- Assessment of youth voice and influence, including:
 - How young people shape activities and decisions
 - Barriers to participation and how these are overcome
- Inclusion of community and partner perspectives, capturing:
 - Perceived change in local provision and relationships
 - Added value of the place-based coach model
 - System level insights relevant to commissioning

All qualitative work must be ethical, inclusive and youth friendly.

5.4 Integration and Learning

The evaluator will integrate quantitative and qualitative findings to:

- Triangulate evidence and increase confidence
- Explain *why* outcomes are achieved, not just *whether*
- Surface learning relevant to delivery and commissioning
- Support reflective learning conversations with Active Fusion

6. Deliverables

Expected deliverables include:

- Inception note / evaluation framework



- Annual learning and impact brief (Years 1 and 2)
- Final three-year evaluation and impact report (Year 3)
- Optional presentation or learning session (within budget)

All outputs should be accessible, commissioner facing and suitable for sharing with funders and partners.

7. Indicative Days and Budget

The total evaluation budget is £17,000 maximum.

Active Fusion anticipates a requirement of approximately 38–40 evaluator days, profiled across the project as follows:

Year	Focus	Indicative Days
Year 1	Inception, baseline and Year 1 analysis	12–14 days
Year 2	Mid-point analysis and learning review	10–12 days
Year 3	Final synthesis and reporting	12–14 days
Total		38–40 days

Tenderers must confirm:

- Day rate
- Total days proposed
- How delivery will be phased within the £17,000 limit

8. Skills and Experience Required

Tenderers should demonstrate:

- Experience evaluating community, youth, health or place-based programmes
- Strong longitudinal and qualitative evaluation expertise
- Understanding of preventative and early intervention models
- Experience producing commissioner ready impact evidence
- Ability to work collaboratively while maintaining independence

9. Governance and Reporting



The evaluator will report to Active Fusion's Head of Education and Communities and work alongside delivery staff to ensure learning is embedded without disrupting frontline delivery.

10. Submission Requirements

Proposals should include:

- Methodology and evaluation approach
- Relevant experience and examples
- Cost and day rate breakdown
- Confirmation of delivery within £17,000
- Any added social value

Deadline for Submission – Wed 07 June 2026

Please email to suzy@activefusion.org.uk